

Nadler Applauds Final Passage of Tough Sanctions Against Iranian Regime

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) applauded the House's final passage of the Conference Report on H.R. 2194, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010. This legislation, expected to be signed into law by President Obama, will ensure that the U.S. follows through on its promise to hold the Iranian regime accountable for its dangerous and illegal policies.

"There is perhaps no greater threat to the peace and security of the world today than Iran," said Nadler.

"The Iranian regime supports terrorism and funds terrorist groups, and it is bent on increasing its power and influence in the strategically important region of the Middle East. In particular, Iran presents an existential threat to Israel, one of our closest allies. As such, the consequences of Iran developing or otherwise obtaining nuclear weapons would be dire. This legislation contains a vast array of provisions which will put a significant squeeze on Iran. For example, it imposes sanctions on companies that sell refined petroleum products to Iran, targeting a key weakness of the Iranian regime. And it punishes foreign banks that support Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, cutting off its funding."

Nadler submitted the following statement to the Congressional Record:

"Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Conference Report on H.R. 2194, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010.

"There is perhaps no greater threat to the peace and security of the world today than Iran. It supports terrorism and funds terrorist groups. And, it is bent on increasing its power and influence in the strategically important region of the Middle East.

"In particular, Iran presents an existential threat to Israel, one of our closest allies. Its leader, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a Holocaust denier who has threatened to wipe Israel off of the map.

"As such, the consequences of Iran developing or otherwise obtaining nuclear weapons would be dire. It instantly would further destabilize the Middle East and potentially lead to a nuclear arms race there.

"Moreover, unlike with other countries where nuclear deterrence has worked, it may not with Iran. Its leaders have proven themselves to hold views that are extreme, irrational, and fundamentalist, and who knows for what crazy reasons they would hold the world hostage and risk their own annihilation. These leaders also could share nuclear materials or weapons with terrorists bent on killing innocent people here and around the world, like Al Qaeda. We cannot let Iran have that power.

"This threat from Iran has been building for years, but, unfortunately, during the previous Administration, very little was done about it. While the rhetoric of former President George W. Bush was tough on Iran, the reality was much different. For eight years, they dithered while Iran built its nuclear capacity.

"President Obama recognized the danger from Iran and immediately adopted a sensible policy of big sticks and big carrots. We began by engaging with the Iranian regime, a necessary part of any sensible strategy. Not only are discussions a worthy first step, they are necessary if for no other reason than to explain to your adversary the severe consequences of their continuing to be a threat to peace. We also need to start with negotiations to show that we tried and thus lay the foundation for strong efforts down the road, should they be needed. Unfortunately, Iran rejected these diplomatic overtures and continues to loudly defy the international community.

"Therefore, we must ratchet up our economic pressure. That is exactly what we are doing. Thanks to the leadership of President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the United States was able to convince other nations to adopt new sanctions on Iran. These sanctions, adopted by the United Nations Security Council, will further isolate Iran from the world economy and, as they are multilateral, represent the optimum mechanism for economic pressure.

"Of course, we also can bring the economic might of the United States to bear, and that is what we are doing today with H.R. 2194. This Conference Report contains a vast array of provisions which will put a significant squeeze on Iran. For example, it imposes sanctions on companies that sell refined petroleum products to Iran, targeting a key weakness of the Iranian regime. It punishes foreign banks that support Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, cutting off its funding. It authorizes state and local governments to divest investments from firms supporting Iran's energy sector and better enables other investment managers from similarly divesting funds.

"Implementing these and the other sanctions in the Conference Report on H.R. 2194 is a critical next step in stopping Iran from becoming a nuclear power. While military options always remain on the table, we do not want to reach a situation where the choice is between having to engage militarily and allowing Iran to have nuclear weapons. Either of those two options is racked with problems, and so we must do all we can to see that it does not come to that.

"I want to thank Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Howard Berman and all other Members who worked so hard on putting this legislation together. Like Chairman Berman and others in Congress, I have endeavored to make sure that the threat from Iran is recognized and dealt with. Those of us who care deeply about this issue know that for the safety of Israel, the United States, and the entire world, we must act and we must act now.

"I encourage all Members to support this Conference Report. Thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time."